



**August 12, 2016**

### **Current Situation at Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant**

It has been over five years since the devastating tsunami that hit Fukushima, Japan caused the worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl. While progress has been made toward decommissioning the stricken power plant, it will likely be decades before completion of the project.

In 2015, work was completed regarding contaminated water treatment, and at present, work is commencing on the full-scale investigation for fuel debris removal. One milestone that was reached in 2015 was the removal of highly contaminated water from the seawater piping trenches in Units 2, 3 and 4 (Unit 4 completed on 12/11/15). News releases and information about the facility's continuing decommissioning plans can be found at Tokyo Electric Power Company's (TEPCO) website at:

<http://www.tepco.co.jp/en/notice/index-e.html>

<http://www.tepco.co.jp/en/decommission/index-e.html>

### **Seafood and Food Safety**

The Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH) has been monitoring the situation at the Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant, and confers with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other state radiation programs regarding radiation safety in food and seafood products. To date, FDA has no evidence that radionuclides from the Fukushima incident are present in the U.S. food supply at levels that would pose a public health concern. This is true for both FDA-regulated food products imported from Japan and U.S. domestic food products, including seafood caught off the coast of the United States.

In July 2015, the FDA analyzed seven samples of fish taken from waters around Hawaii and detected no gamma-ray emitting radionuclides except for naturally occurring K-40. The fish sampled were *Tuna - Albacore*, *Yellowfin*, *Bluefin*, *Skipjack*, *Etc.* (4), *Wahoo* (1), *Marlin* (1) and *Mahi Mahi* (1).

### **Seawater Safety and Shoreline Surveys for Radiation and Japan Tsunami Marine Debris (JTMD)**

The HDOH continues to monitor the results of surveys and monitoring performed by TEPCO, as well as review scientific publications and reports from both private and public scientific institutions, to keep abreast of any potential impact on the ocean and sea life. Recent analysis shows a modest increase in the levels of radioactive material in the waters off the West Coast of the United States. While we also expect to see a

slight increase in levels around the Hawaiian Islands, we again do not anticipate any public health effect on beachgoers.

HDOH continues to perform shoreline surveillance on Oahu, Kauai, Maui and the Big Island as needed, utilizing highly sensitive radiation detection equipment to measure radiation levels on the sand, rocks, and any marine debris that may have washed ashore. Should the need arise, surveillance may be ramped up and performed more frequently. Results of the most recent surveys performed from January – December 2015 were consistent with normal background levels. Normal background radiation levels near the shoreline generally range from 1 to 5 microRoentgens per hour.

### **Samples from Precipitation and Drinking Water**

Precipitation and drinking water samples continue to be collected following routine sampling protocols. Drinking water samples are collected on a quarterly basis and precipitation samples are collected as rain capture permits. Samples are sent to the EPA laboratory for analysis. Analysis of the data for 2015 continues to show typical fluctuations associated with background radiation. Detailed data and searches can be found at the following EPA website:

[http://iaspub.epa.gov/enviro/erams\\_query\\_v2.simple\\_query](http://iaspub.epa.gov/enviro/erams_query_v2.simple_query)



*Collection of Precipitation Samples*

### **Radiation Air Monitor Shows Normal Background Radiation Levels**

One stationary EPA RadNet air monitoring station in Honolulu continues to measure radiation levels throughout the state. Recent analysis continues to show typical fluctuations associated with background radiation. HDOH continues to work with other Federal, State and County partners to monitor the situation in Japan. The department is prepared to accelerate radiation sampling if the need arises. Near real-time air monitoring data can be found at EPA's website:

<http://epa.gov/radnet/radnet-data/radnet-honolulu-bq.html>

For additional information, please visit our webpage at

<http://health.hawaii.gov/irhb/japan2011/> or contact our radiation staff at (808) 586-4700.